

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

**106 Hancock Road**

**Peterborough, New Hampshire**

**CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD**

**School Board Meeting**

**Tuesday, November 27, 2018**

**Immediately Following Public Hearing**

**MINUTES**

**BOARD**

Rich Cahoon, Richard Dunning,  
Jim Fredrickson, Bernd Foecking,  
Janine Lesser, Niki McGettigan,  
Stephan Morrissey, Pierce Rigrod (6:53 pm),  
Myron Steere, Jerome Wilson

Molly Janoch, Student Rep.  
Asher MacLeod, CVEA Rep.

**ADMINISTRATION**

Kimberly Saunders, Supt.  
Dr. Ann Forrest, Asst. Supt.  
Mindy Ryan, B.A.  
Tim Grossi, Dir. Of Facilities  
Tim Markley, H.R.  
Stephanie Syre-Hager, AES  
Kat Foecking, FES  
Ann O'Bryant, SMS  
Nicole Pease, DCS  
Larry Pimental, PES

**1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

**Myron Steere called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.**

**2. Accept School Board Meeting Minutes (Board Vote Required)**

**a. November 6, 2018**

**Stephan Morrissey moved to accept the minutes of November 6, 2018. Dick Dunning second. Bernd Foecking moved to amend the minutes on page 3, agenda item 8b. Funding Formula, to remove the dollar sign in front of 2,140.73. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous as amended.**

**3. Points of Pride**

Kimberly Saunders shared various points of pride as reported to her by administrators.

**4. Public Comment**

None.

**5. Consent Agenda**

**a. Personnel**

- Retirements June 2019

Tim Markley referenced the retirement of Elizabeth Lawrence for June 2019.

**Stephan Morrissey moved to approve and grant the exception for retirement. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.**

Tim Markley also referenced a request for the June 2020 retirement of Nancy Gagnon.

**Stephan Morrissey moved to approve the retirement as requested. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.**

**6. Superintendent's Report and Presentation of Business**

**a. Monthly Events Calendar**

No changes were made to the November or December monthly calendars.

**7. Reports**

**a. Student Representative – Molly Janoch/Marina McMahon**

Molly Janoch reported that Student Council attended a staff meeting and had a discussion with the teachers about things they have noticed in the school. More to come.

*MISSION STATEMENT*

*The ConVal Regional School District, in partnership with its member communities, will inspire all learners to achieve academically, contribute to the global community, and thrive as independent and productive citizens.*

**b. Teacher Representative – Asher MacLeod**

Asher MacLeod reported that holiday concerts are coming up this month.

**c. Strategic Plan Committee**

Passed over.

**d. ATC Committee**

Stephan Morrissey reported that the State Review of the ATC Report was discussed. A general discussion on the future took place. Nashua Community College is still planned for a January start.

**e. Budget & Property Committee – Jim Fredrickson**

Jim Fredrickson reported that a deep dive of the budget took place on the same day as the B&P meeting. At the regular meeting, Bob Hayden from Standard Power attended and provided some advice on the feasibility of solar power. A group will be formed to study further. A smaller scale project may be considered for trade school collaboration.

A final report on the high school science report was discussed. The project came in \$670K under budget as the result. The \$1M bond will be used and only several hundred thousand out of the trust fund for this project.

**f. Communication Committee – Niki McGettigan**

Niki McGettigan reported that the meeting was a working meeting.

**g. Education Committee – Crista Salmay**

Dick Dunning reported that the media specialists from the middle and elementary school came and reported out on the learning commons model and the direction they are moving. In addition, credits through VLAC and other credit earning opportunities were discussed and will go back to the Policy Committee. The handbook language will be updated to include language on this change.

**8. Old Business**

**a. Budget/Warrant FY' 20**

Budget – Version 3

Estimates of adequacy will be down by \$45K; this is different from what was proposed in Version 2. Work on the default budget continues.

How was the figure for snow removal arrived at? Typically it is a three year rolling average. One bid came in. Tim Grossi will provide additional information.

Warrant –

Stephan Morrissey moved a warrant article forward. He said that he has been on the board for years and has seen the struggle with student enrollment and school funding. The board has worked hard to deliver the best education for students. There are a lot of irons in the fire and many interests. He said that rather than have a board forced by an outside source. **Stephan Morrissey moved a warrant article forward that reads:**

**The Contoocook Valley School District (ConVal) shall be responsible for grades one through twelve (1-12) and Kindergartens. Kindergartens were previously authorized by a vote at an annual Cooperative School District meeting. Grades nine through twelve (9-12) shall be educated at the centrally located Senior High School in Peterborough. Grades five through eight (5-8) may be educated at the Middle Schools in Antrim and Peterborough. Elementary Schools shall be maintained in Antrim, Bennington, Frankestown, Greenfield, Hancock, and Peterborough. As school populations change, students from the Middle Schools may be reassigned to Elementary School locations. Such reassignment needs would be determined by ConVal Administration, but each location change would have to be approved by the School Board.**

It affectively allows us to close some of our elementary school, in particular, the Dublin and Temple elementary schools. We can also offer to the public, a different cost sharing for the schools.

He said that we need to give the public time to focus on education. If the vote goes against the warrant article, the board will have to dig back in.

He asked for a vote from the board to put this on the warrant to give the public the choice.

**Dick Dunning second.**

Stephan Morrissey said that it would impact Dublin and Temple.

Rich Cahoon asked about removing two towns' names, can we keep them open. Is the attempt to "allow" the board to close those schools? A legal opinion would be needed to review.

Bernd Foecking said that this comes ad hoc based on numbers that might change in the short term.

Niki McGettigan said that if the intent is to be sure that as populations change, students at the elementary and middle schools could be changed.

Janine Lesser said that what she does not like about the article is that it chooses Dublin and Temple. She would prefer to keep it open to close schools based on population and not identify communities.

Stephan Morrissey said that the problem with that is that there is a distrust that we would close all of the elementary schools.

Jerry Wilson said that we would be better off setting a threshold when a school reaches a certain number, the school is considered for closure.

Jim Fredrickson said that we are also considering a warrant for the funding formula. Is it either/or?

Rich Cahoon said that it might be possible to craft a single warrant article that makes it either adopting this or the smaller schools pay to a certain ADM. That way, there would not be a dueling warrant article.

Bernd Foecking said that penalizing towns without their ability to opt out of the district is troublesome for him.

Rich Cahoon said that the Articles of Agreement do not have to list the towns. It would be complicated to accomplish this in one warrant article but it could be done.

Stephan Morrissey said that he objected to the use of the word "penalizing". If it was best for kids, we would be looking at consolidation. We are constrained by trying to do the right thing for children yet, the perception is inaccurate that borders are important. We continue to have our administration work on this topic. For kids' sake, larger schools can be a benefit. This is a step to see if the public has a stomach for this.

Rich Cahoon said that it does lay out the conditions on which the funding formula will be discussed. He liked the approach that Pierce Rigrod came up with that spoke to some number at which a school closes. He preferred focusing on changing the funding formula. Rich further said that changing the funding formula does not cure anything; more kids in the schools is the fix.

Stephan Morrissey agreed that a vote can take place on this after discussion on the funding formula. Stephan said that he was shocked to learn the number of families that homeschool their children.

Kimberly Saunders said that we presently do not have information on who is voting for this; parents choose to homeschool for various reasons.

Bernd Foecking said that he finds it frustrating that we spend months and months for consolidation that were thrown out in one or two meetings and now we are considering putting something on the warrant that is half-baked.

Dick Dunning took issue with Bernd by saying that placing students in schools with limited options is not fair to them. We have a responsibility to the community to provide an education that is fiscally sound. If we do not reduce the overhead, we do not reduce the cost and the taxes.

Rich said that we have done many studies, but we have not laid the choice out for communities. We need to lay it all out.

Niki McGettigan said that Temple has three teachers in the building and Hancock has five. Temple is running more efficiently than Hancock.

Rich Cahoon said that towns need to do something to help increase the number of students in their schools by changing regulations. Or, they need to pay more.

Janine Lesser was in favor of the last consolidation model developed or going with the surcharge.

Stephan Morrissey said that politically it cannot be sold. All of the towns that have smaller schools would be on the list for closure. He felt that the benefit would be for the students.

Rich Cahoon asked for copies of the most recent consolidation model; there were two schools.

**Stephan Morrissey moved for a 15 minute recess at 6:55 p.m. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.**

**The Board reconvened at 7:05 p.m.**

Rich Cahoon said that the next board meeting is in one week. We could be better prepared for this conversation. Board members can place items on the agenda.

Janine Lesser said that it would be good to see Stephan's proposal written out and to also look at the consolidation models and be prepared to discuss them next week.

Myron Steere said that we do have a motion and a second on the floor.

Stephan Morrissey asked to have legal look at merging the funding formula with this proposed warrant article.

**Stephan Morrissey withdrew his motion which would allow this to be looked at to provide the communities with choice.**

**Dick Dunning second.**

**Pierce Rigrod, Niki McGettigan, Bernd Foecking, and Rich Cahoon opposed. Motion carried.**

Rich Cahoon said that we want legal to look at making a warrant article for school closure, allow a town to close a school; what?

Stephan said to either allow the School Board to make a choice for closing a school or alternately if a town wishes to keep their school that they bear a cost.

Kimberly said that specific wording would be necessary to provide to legal to ask the question. It would be difficult to ask the attorney to get something together for us using generalities.

Stephan said that this is not a bushwhack; it has been a continual discussion. We have to make stark choices available to the public. He said that he honestly believes it is going to be better for the kids. If there is a way to link having the ability to close a small school or have that community absorb the cost, he would be in favor. Stephan will work on the wording for the change to the Articles along with the wording that will be developed for the funding formula.

Pierce Rigrod said that they are combining two very complicated questions into one.

Rich Cahoon referenced a former consolidation proposal that included a four school consolidation. We have not asked administration which elementary schools should be closed to solve our elementary school problem.

Janine Lesser said that the language is specifically to close Dublin and Temple. Using the word "may" would allow people to believe that we would close more.

### **b. Funding Formula**

Kimberly Saunders referenced a handout that shared information related to the funding formula.

It says that there has to be 65 students in the K-4 range for a school. If a school does not, it changes the calculations for ADM assessment. For example, if a school had 10 fewer student than the minimum, the number ten would be multiplied by the ADM to arrive at the surcharge, not factoring in adequacy and other factors.

Rich Cahoon said that the first step is raising additional funds from towns with low student populations. It is not to allow a larger town to pay less.

Kimberly Saunders said that at the last meeting, the direction was to look at 12 students per grade level and develop a workable sheet. The number "65" can be changed. A discussion on building capacity is a different conversation.

Pierce Rigrod said that it is a lot of money per student for a school to come up with.

This is talking about charging towns with small numbers of students to offset what larger towns are paying to subsidize the small schools.

Janine Lesser said that this discussion is about money. What really is a driver is that this is not a sustainable educational model; it is not good for the students, it is not good for the teachers, and it is not good for administration.

Rich said that it is the board's job to talk about money and look out for the budget. That is a charge of the board.

Jim Fredrickson said that the idea is to communicate that the small school in your town is costing a lot of money.

Rich said that he feels the financial situation we are in, with all of the small schools, prevents us from doing some of the things we want to do i.e. universal preschool.

Bernd Foecking suggested using percentage of capacity rather than enrollment. Capacity is difficult to define because it can be measured in different ways.

The purpose of this was to allow towns to keep their small schools and pay additional for it.

Costs need to be reduced. It can be only done by reducing staff. What is the best way?

**Jerry Wilson moved to use the number 65 for school enrollment for the funding formula. Dick Dunning second.**

Pierce Rigrod asked why 65 over 60. Dick Dunning said that it is a fairer number for schools. It is a 2.75% surcharge.

Dick said that schools were built for 120 students. 65 students is roughly half.

Kimberly said that when the schools were being built, the demographic studies showed that there was an expected decline in enrolment.

Rich Cahoon said that he thinks about the number 70; a former Superintendent said that once a school gets below 70 students it is no longer viable. He likes 65 and would go to 70.

**In favor: Dick Dunning, Jerry Wilson, Janine Lesser, Rich Cahoon, Stephan Morrissey, Jim Fredrickson,**

**Opposed: Bernd Foecking, Pierce Rigrod, and Niki McGettigan.**

**Motion carried to use the number 65 for school enrollment for the funding formula.**

**Rich Cahoon moved to have the Superintendent have legal draft an article. Stephan Morrissey second.**

**Opposed: Bernd Foecking, Pierce Rigrod, and Niki McGettigan. All others in favor. Motion carried.**

This is going to be a change in the Articles of Agreement. The local tax assessment would be divided by total ADM. A reassessment system would be developed to use the K-4 minimum of 65 students.

Policy would have to work out where students who reside in one town but attend school in another would be counted.

### **c. 2<sup>nd</sup> Read Policy Adoption (Board Vote Required)**

- JKAA: Use of Restraint, Seclusion, and Physical Contact

**Rich Cahoon moved to adopt this policy as read. Stephan Morrissey second. Unanimous.**

## **9. New Business**

### **a. Expenditure Report**

Mindy Ryan reported that we have a budget balance of \$4.9M; within this figure, there is \$1.8M open in salaries. When the \$1.6M came in on the warrant and salaries, a move is needed for the functions to the proper category to appropriate where they belong. The 100 salary series have adjustments that need to be made for audit purposes. Mindy asked the board to look at the final page because out of the \$1.8M that is open, \$1.7M has to get redeployed from where it is to all of the specific lines. There are no errors, they just need reallocation.

**Stephan Morrissey moved to authorize the transfer of \$1,719,055.44. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.**

## **10. Public Comment**

None.

**11. Approval of Manifests (Board Vote Required)**

Mindy Ryan certified that manifests listed totaling \$619,612.21 and Payroll totaling \$1,750,900.19 have been reviewed by her and found to be proper charges against the Contoocook Valley School District for goods and or services received and have been properly processed prior to their submittal to the School Board.

**Stephan Morrissey moved to approve the manifests as read. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.**

**12. Non-Public Session: RSA 91-A:3,II (If Required)**

- a. Legal
- b. Personnel
- c. Negotiations

**Stephan Morrissey moved to enter into non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3,II at 8:21 p.m. for matters of legal, personnel, and negotiations. Unanimous on a roll call vote.**

**Rich Cahoon moved to exit non-public session at 8:50 p.m. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.**

**Stephan Morrissey moved to seal the minutes of personnel for a period of ten (10) years. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.**

**Stephan Morrissey moved to seal the minutes of legal non-public session for a period of ten (10) years. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.**

**Stephan Morrissey moved to seal the minutes of negotiations session for a period of five (5) years. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.**

**Stephan Morrissey moved to allow disbursement for buyback for retirees as specified for Sharon Hall. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.**

**Stephan Morrissey moved to allow disbursement for buyback for retirees as specified for Liz Lawrence. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.**

Kimberly Saunders reported that the board once spoke about a soft freeze on the budget. Is this what the board wants administration to continue? Specifically, Alice training in the amount of \$75K and \$50K for co-teaching.

**Stephan Morrissey moved to authorize spending for these items. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.**

Clarification on the default has been received and is being worked on. There is \$1M difference between the proposed and the default.

CVAA merit pool? Kimberly did not think this would be included in the default.

Kimberly Saunders reported that November 7<sup>th</sup> was a difficult day for the district. Twenty-two administrators were incredible. There were a lot of moving parts in this crisis situation. The board should consider a recognition for them. Where would funds be accessed for this?

Other people were noted as well. Public recognition rather than monetary was suggested.

Bernd Foecking said that recognition for a job well done in a crisis situation should not be monetary.

It is important that it come from the board. The board will give it some thought.

**Dick Dunning motioned to adjourn at 9:03 p.m. Jerry Wilson second. Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok